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عَقِيدَةُ أَهْلِ السُّنَّةِ وَالْجَمَاعَةِ
فِي الصَّحَابَةِ الْكَرَامَةِ

The CREED of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah concerning the COMPANIONS

**By Shaikh 'Abdul-Muhsin
bin Hamad Al-'Abbaad**

(may Allaah preserve him)

Translated by
isma'eel alarcon

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Published On-Line for Free Distribution

First Edition: June 2004

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About the Book: This is a translation of a small treatise entitled “**Aqeedatu Ahlis-Sunnah wal-Jamaa’ah fis-Sahaabat-il-Kiraam**” (The Creed of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa’ah concerning the Companions) written by Shaikh ‘Abdul-Muhsin Al-‘Abbaad. The source for this treatise was an article the Shaikh wrote for the Islamic University of Madeenah Newsletter (Issue 2 of their fourth year) Shawaal 1391H. This article was distributed together with a transcribed lecture from the Shaikh entitled “Sending Salaat on the Prophet” in a booklet published by the Islamic University of Madeenah.

In this brief presentation, Shaikh Al-‘Abbaad, one of the senior scholars and a Muhaddith in Saudi Arabia, may Allaah preserve him, outlines the proper belief a Muslim should have with regard to the Companions, and that is of moderateness.

So the Muslim should not go to either extreme of being fanatical towards individuals amongst the Companions or being lenient and heedless about the rights they deserve. Rather, it is upon the believer, the adherent of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa’ah, to have love and respect for all of them, as well as to acknowledge their virtues and refrain from mentioning their errors and mishaps. The Shaikh presents the material in a concise but educational manner, quoting numerous ayaat, ahaadeeth and statements of the Salaf.

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THE TREATISE

From Allaah's mercy and kindness to His servants and from His favor upon them is that He sent to them a Messenger from amongst themselves to convey to them the Message from their Lord and to guide them to everything that benefits them and to warn them from everything that harms them. And indeed the Prophet ﷺ fulfilled his duty of conveying the Message in the most complete and perfect of manners - so he directed his ummah towards every good and he warned them against every evil. Allaah chose people to accompany him and take knowledge from him, who were the best of this nation, which is itself the best of all nations. So Allaah honored them by allowing them to accompany His Prophet. And He specifically blessed them, in this worldly life, with the opportunity of seeing him ﷺ and hearing his hadeeth directly from his noble mouth. This is the bounty of Allaah, which He bestows upon whom He wills, and Allaah possesses the greatest of bounties.

The Companions conveyed from Allaah's Messenger that which he was sent with from guidance, in the most complete and perfect form. So they will have the greatest of rewards due to their companionship of Allaah's Messenger, their fighting in Jihaad alongside him and their noble actions in spreading Islaam.

And they will also have the same reward as those who come after them, since they serve as the intermediaries between them and Allaah's Messenger. This is because: **"Whoever calls towards guidance, he will have a reward like that of the reward earned by those who practice that guidance after him. And it will not detract anything away from their reward."**¹ This has been authentically reported on the Prophet ﷺ in a hadeeth transmitted by Muslim in his Saheeh.

Allaah praised the Companions in His Mighty Book and the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ praised them in his purified Sunnah. This is enough for them as a virtue and honor. Allaah says:

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

"And the foremost to embrace Islaam from the Muhaajireen and the Ansaar and also those who followed them in goodness, Allaah is pleased with them and they

¹ **Saheeh Hadeeth:** Reported by Muslim (2674), Abu Dawood (4609), At-Tirmidhee (2676), Ibn Maajah (206) and others.

are pleased with Him. Allaah has prepared for them gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise) to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success." [Surah At-Tawbah: 100]

And He says:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سَوَاقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

"Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah. And those who are with him are severe against the disbelievers, merciful towards one another. You can see them bowing and prostrating (in prayer), seeking Bounty from Allaah and (His) Good Pleasure. Their marks (of Faith) are on their faces (foreheads) from the traces of prostration. This is their description in the Torah. But their description in the Gospel is like that of a cultivated seed, which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong and becomes thick, and it stands straight on its stem, pleasing the farmers, that he may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allaah has promised those among them who believe and do good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward." [Surah Al-Fat'h: 29]

In Allaah's saying concerning the Sahaabah: **"that he may enrage the disbelievers with them"**, there can be found the severest ruling, the harshest threat and the worst of warnings for those who are enraged by the Sahaabah or those who have some hatred for them in their hearts.

Allaah says:

لَا يَسْتَوِي مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ أَنْفَقَ مِن قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَاتَلَ أُولَٰئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِن بَعْدُ وَقَاتَلُوا وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

"Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the Victory (Treaty of Hudaibiyah) [i.e. they are not equal to those who came after the Victory]. They are higher in degree than those who spent and fought (in Allaah's

Cause) afterward. But to all, Allaah has promised the best reward. And Allaah is All-Aware of what you do.” [Surah Al-Hadeed: 10]

Allaah says, discussing the distribution of the war-booty:

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

“(And there is also a share in this booty) for the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and properties, seeking bounties from Allaah and looking to please Him, and helping Allaah and His Messenger. These are the truthful ones.

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّؤُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

And (it is also) for those who before them, had homes (in Madeenah) and then accepted the Faith (Islaam). They are the ones who love those who migrated to them, and they have no jealousy in their hearts for that which they (Muhaajireen) have been given (of booty from Banu Naadir). Instead, they give them preference over themselves even though they had more of a need for it than them. And whoever guards himself from his own miserliness, then these will be the successful.

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِن بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَؤُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

And those who come after them say: 'Our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in Faith. And put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord, You are indeed full of kindness, most Merciful.'” [Surah Al-Hashr: 8-10]

The first of these three ayaat from Surat Al-Hashr is in reference to the Muhaajireen (the Sahaabah who migrated from Makkah to Madeenah). The second ayah refers to the Ansaar (the Sahaabah who resided in Madeenah and who helped and took in the Muhaajireen). The third ayah refers to those who will come after the Muhaajireen and

the Ansaar, seeking Allaah's forgiveness for them, and asking Allaah not to put hatred in their hearts for them. And there is nothing beyond these three groups except for one who deserts (them) and falls into one of the traps of the Devil. This is why 'Aa'ishah (*radyyAllaahu ‘anhaa*) explained to 'Urwah bin az-Zubair the condition of some of those who deserted them and were thus forsaken:

"They were commanded to seek forgiveness for the Companions of Allaah's Messenger, but they (instead) reviled them." Imaam Muslim transmitted this report in the last part of his Saheeh. An-Nawawee said in his explanation of it, after mentioning the ayah in Surah Al-Hashr:

"Imaam Maalik used this as proof for his ruling that anyone who reviles the Sahaabah has no right to the war-booty. This is since Allaah only made it for those who seek forgiveness for them (i.e. Companions), from those who come after them."

Ibn Katheer said in his tafseer of this ayah:

"How great is the ruling that Imaam Maalik derived from this ayah, in that the Raafidee – one who reviles the Companions – gets no portion of the wealth from the war-booty due to his lack of characterizing himself with the attributes of those whom Allaah has praised in His saying: **'Our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who have preceded us in Faith. And put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord, You are indeed full of kindness, most Merciful.'**"

The Prophet ﷺ said: **"The best of mankind is my generation, then those that come after them, then those that come after them."**² Reported by Al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and others from the report of 'Imraan bin Husayn and 'Abdullaah bin Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with them both. Muslim reported it on the authority of Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه with the wording: **"The best among my nation (ummah) is the generation I was sent to – then those that come after them, then those that come after them."** Allaah knows best if he mentioned the third or not.

Muslim also reported it from 'Aa'ishah that she said: "A man once asked the Prophet: 'Which people are the best?' So he ﷺ replied: **'The generation of people that I am in (now, then the second (generation), then the third.'**" It is reported in the two Saheehs (of Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) from the narration of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

² **Saheeh Hadeeth:** Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim from the hadeeth of Ibn Mas'ood. Many Companions narrated this hadeeth, amongst them 'Imraan bin Husayn and An-Nu'maan bin Basheer. See *as-Saheehah* of Imaam Al-Albaanee: (699-700)

"There will come upon the people a time in which a group of people will fight (in Jihaad), and it will be said: 'Is there anyone amongst you who accompanied Allaah's Messenger?' (I.e. the Sahaabah) They will reply 'Yes' and so they will be given victory. Then there will come upon the people a time in which a group of people will fight (in Jihaad), and it will be said: 'Is there anyone amongst you who accompanied the Companions of Allaah's Messenger?' (I.e. the Taabi'een) They will reply 'Yes' and so they will be given victory. Then there will come upon the people a time in which a group of people will fight (in Jihaad), and it will be said: 'Is there anyone amongst you who accompanied those who accompanied the Companions of Allaah's Messenger?' (I.e. the Atbaa' At-Taabi'een) They will reply 'Yes' and so they will be given victory."³

Ibn Battah reported with an authentic chain of narration, according to *Minhaaj-us-Sunnah* of Ibn Taimiyyah, that Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ said: **"Do not revile the Companions of Allaah's Messenger, for one hour spent with Allaah's Messenger by one of them is better than a good deed of one of you (done) for forty years."**

In the wording reported by Wakee', he says: **"...better than a good deed of one of you (done) for his entire life."**

And when Sa'eed bin Zayd ؓ mentioned the ten Companions who were given the good tidings of (entering) Paradise, he said:

"I swear by Allaah, the meeting of one man amongst them with the Messenger of Allaah is better than the deed of one of you, even if he does it for the length of Nooh's life." Reported by Abu Dawood and At-Tirmidhee.⁴

Jaabir ؓ reported that: "It was once said to 'Aa'ishah: 'There are some people that seek to lower the Companions of Allaah's Messenger, even Abu Bakr and 'Umar.' So she said: 'And you are not pleased with this? Their deeds came to an end, but Allaah loved that their reward not come to an end.'"

Ibn Al-Atheer mentioned this in his book *Jaami'-ul-Usool*. What provides evidence for what she said is the saying of the Prophet in the authentic hadeeth: **"The bankrupt person from my ummah will come on the Day of Judgement having (performed) prayer, fasting and Zakaat. But yet he abused this person, slandered that**

³ **Saheeh Hadeeth:** Reported by Al-Bukhaaree (6/88 and 610 of *al-Fat'h*), Muslim (3532), Ahmad (3/7), Al-Humaydee (743), Al-Baghawee in *Sharh-us-Sunnah* (14/73-74) from the path of Jaabir bin 'Abdillaah from Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree.

⁴ **Hasan Hadeeth:** Reported by Abu Dawood (4650), An-Nasaa'ee in *al-Kubraa*, Ibn Maajah (134) and Ahmad (1629).

person, took money wrongfully from this person, spilled the blood of that one, and beat this one. So some of his good deeds will be given to this person and some of them will be given to that person. So if his good deeds run out before he makes up for what is against him, he will take from their sins and they will be charged against him. And then he will be flung into the Hellfire.”⁵

Al-Bukhaaree reported in his Saheeh on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Do not revile my Companions! For if one of you were to give away in charity the size of mount Uhud in gold, it would not equal a *mudd* (handful using two hands cupped together) of one of them nor even half of it."**

Muslim reported in his Saheeh from Abu Hurairah ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Do not revile my Companions! Do not revile my Companions! For by the One whose Hand my soul is in, if one of you were to give away the size of mount Uhud in gold for charity, it would not equal a *mudd* of one of them nor even half of it."**

He also reported it from Abu Sa'eed ؓ with the wording: "There was a dispute between Khaalid bin Al-Waleed and 'Abdur-Rahmaan bin 'Awf, so Khaalid reviled him. Upon this Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said: **'Do not revile anyone from my Companions. For if one of you were to give away the size of mount Uhud in gold for charity, it would not equal a *mudd* of one of them nor even half of it.'**"

So if the Sword of Allaah, Khaalid Ibn-ul-Waleed and others who accepted Islaam after the treaty of Hudaibiyah cannot have their large amount of good deeds compare to the small amount performed by 'Abdur-Rahmaan bin 'Awf and others who accepted Islaam previously – even though all of them had the honor of accompanying the Prophet – then how is it for those who did not attain the honor of (being from) the Companions in comparison to those superior individuals? Truly the distance is great and indeed the difference is far! So how far is the ground from the sky! Rather, how far is the seventh (lowest) level of earth from the seventh (highest) level of heaven! This is the bounty of Allaah, which He bestows upon whom He wills. And Allaah possesses the greatest of bounties!

These are some of the Qur'aanic ayaat and prophetic ahaadeeth that provide evidence for the virtue of these best of people, the likes of which did not exist before and will not exist afterward. May Allaah be pleased with them.

⁵ **Saheeh Hadeeth:** Reported by Muslim (2581), At-Tirmidhee (2418), Ahmad (2/303), Al-Bayhaqee (6/93) from the path of Al-'Alaa bin 'Abdir-Rahmaan from his father from Abu Hurairah in *marfoo'* form. At-Tirmidhee said it was *hasan saheeh*.

All of the Companions of Allaah's Messenger are trustworthy based on Allaah's testifying that for them and because of His praise for them and the praise of His Messenger ﷺ for them. An-Nawawee said in *at-Taqreeb*, which As-Suyootee explained in his *Tadreeb-ur-Raawee*:

"All of the Companions are trustworthy – those who were involved in the afflictions (*fitan*) and other than them – according to the consensus of the scholars."

Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr said in *al-Isaabah*: "Ahl-us-Sunnah have unanimously agreed that all of them (the Sahaabah) are trustworthy and no one opposed this except some deviants amongst the innovators."

This is why there is no harm in not knowing a Companion in a chain of narration. So if a Taabi'ee says: "On the authority of a man who accompanied the Prophet..." this does not affect the report. This is because not knowing the Companions (in the chain) causes no harm since they are all trustworthy. Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdaadee said in his book *al-Kifaayah*:

"Every hadeeth that has a chain of narration that is connected between the one who reported it and the Prophet is not to be acted upon until first having affirmed the trustworthiness and reliability of all the narrators (in the chain). It is an obligation to investigate all of their conditions, except for the Sahaabee (Companion) who raises it (or attributes the hadeeth) to the Prophet. This is because the trustworthiness of the Companions is established and well known based on Allaah's affirming that for them, His informing us of their pure state and His preference of them in the texts of the Qur'aan..."

Then he (*rahimahullaah*) went on to list some ayaat and ahaadeeth concerning their virtues and said:

"And even if Allaah or His Messenger had not mentioned anything about them from what we just stated now (of their virtues), the condition they were upon of having made Hijrah, fought in Jihaad, of having offered their support, sacrificed their lives and wealth, experienced the killings of their parents and children, of mutually advising for the Religion and having strong Faith and unshakeable certainty, (all of this) would be enough to prove their trustworthiness and enough for one to have firm faith in their honesty and integrity. And it would necessitate the understanding that they are the best from those who receive testimony and approval as to their trustworthiness and reliability from all of the people that will come after them forever and ever."

Then he reports a narration with a chain connected to Abu Zur'ah, who said: "If you see a man seeking to belittle anyone amongst the Companions of Allaah's Messenger ﷺ, then know that he is a heretic (*zindeeq*). This is because according to us the Messenger of Allaah is true and the Qur'aan is true. And the only ones who brought this Qur'aan and the Sunan (plural of Sunnah) to us are the Companions of Allaah's Messenger. They only wish to disparage and demolish our witnesses so that they can nullify the Book and the Sunnah, whereas they are more deserving of being disparaged for they are the heretics (*zanaadiqah*)."

The *madh-hab* of Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah concerning the Companions is that of moderateness between the two ends of extremism and heedlessness. It is moderateness amidst the extremist fanatics who elevate the esteemed ones amongst them to a level that is only befitting for Allaah or for His messengers and moderateness amidst the heedless and harsh ones who belittle and revile them. So they are in the middle between those who are excessive and those who fall short - they love all of them and put each one of them in the due place that they deserve, with fairness and justice. So they do not elevate them to a level they don't deserve, nor do they belittle them, taking away what they are worthy of. Their tongues are moist with mentioning them only in good, according to what is befitting for them. And their hearts are filled with love for them.

And whatever disputes and differences that occurred between (some of) them, that can be authentically confirmed, we hold that they were Mujtahideen in that regard – either they were correct and will receive one reward for their Ijtihad and one reward for being correct, or they were wrong and will receive just one reward for their Ijtihad while their error will be forgiven. They were not infallible since they were human beings. At times they were correct and at times they erred. But how much more were they correct as compared to others being correct, and how fewer were their errors as compared to the errors of others? And on top of this, they will receive Allaah's forgiveness and contentment.

The books of Ahl-us-Sunnah are filled with a clarification of this pure and radiant Creed concerning these elite people, who were chosen amongst mankind ﷺ. May Allaah be pleased with them all.

An example of this is the statement of At-Tahaawee in his (book on the) Creed of Ahl-us-Sunnah: "We love the Companions of Allaah's Messenger. But we do not go to extremes in our love for anyone amongst them, nor do we absolve ourselves from any of them. And we hate anyone that hates them or anyone that talks about them in a bad way. And we do not mention them except with good. Loving them is *Deen* (Religion),

Eemaan (Faith) and *Ihsaan* (Goodness) and hating them is *Kufr* (Disbelief), *Nifaaq* (hypocrisy) and *Tughyaan* (transgression)."

Ibn Abee Zayd Al-Qayrawaane said in the introduction to his famous *ar-Risaalah*, in which he explains the Creed of Ahl-us-Sunnah: "The best of generations is the one that saw the Messenger of Allaah. And the best of the Companions are the (four) rightly guided Khaleefahs - Abu Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmaan, then 'Alee, may Allaah be pleased with them all. None of the Companions should be mentioned except in the best of manners. We believe in refraining from (speaking about) the differences that occurred between them. And that they are the most deserving of people of having excuses made for them and (that) they are to be thought of in the best way."

Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal said in his book *as-Sunnah*: "And from the Sunnah is mentioning the good qualities of the Companions of Allaah's Messenger - all of them - and to refrain from (speaking about) what disputes occurred between them. So whoever reviles the Companions of Allaah's Messenger or (just) one of them, then he is an innovator, a Raafidee. Loving them is a Sunnah and making du'aa (supplication) for them is a means of getting close to Allaah (*taqarrub*). Following them is a means and taking from their example is a virtue..."

And he said: "It is not permissible for anyone to mention any of their faults. Nor can anyone disparage any of them. So whoever does that, then the authority (sultan) is obligated to reprimand him and punish him. And he is not to pardon him, but rather must punish him and then request him to repent. So if he repents, he should accept it from him. And if he doesn't repent, he should reinstate the punishment upon him and lock him in prison for good until he repents and recants (from his false belief)."

Imaam Abu 'Uthmaan As-Saaboonee said in his book *'Aqeedat-us-Salaf wa Ashaab-il-Hadeeth*: "And they held it an obligation to refrain from (speaking about) the differences that occurred between the Companions of Allaah's Messenger and to purify the tongues from mentioning anything that consists of a blemish on them or a degradation of them. And they held it an obligation to ask Allaah to grant mercy to all of them and to show friendship to all of them."

Shaikh-ul-Islaam Ibn Taimiyyah said in his book *Al-'Aqeedat-ul-Waasitiyyah*: "Among the Principles of Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah is maintaining pure hearts and tongues towards the Companions of Allaah's Messenger ﷺ, as Allaah has described them in His saying: **'And those who come after them say: 'Our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in Faith. And put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord, You are indeed full of kindness, most Merciful.'** [Surah Al-Hashr: 10]

And (from their principles is) obedience to the Prophet with regard to his ﷺ saying: **'Do not revile my Companions! For by the One whose Hand my soul is in, if one of you were to give away the size of mount Uhud in gold for charity, it would not equal a mudd of one of them nor even half of it.'**

They accept what is stated in the Qur'aan, the Sunnah and the Consensus concerning their (the Companion's) virtues and high status. And they give preference to those who spent their wealth and fought (in the Way of Allaah) before the Victory, which refers to the Treaty of al-Hudaibiyah, over those who gave their wealth and fought after it. They give precedence to the Muhaajireen over the Ansaar. And they believe that Allaah said to the people who fought in (the Battle of) Badr - who numbered over three hundred people: **'Do whatever you wish, for I have already forgiven you.'**

And they believe that no one who pledged their allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ under the tree will enter the Hellfire, as the Prophet ﷺ informed us. In fact, Allaah was pleased with them and they were pleased with Him. And they were more than one thousand four hundred people.

They designate to Paradise whoever the Messenger of Allaah testified will be in Paradise, such as the Ten (Companions), Thaabit bin Qays bin Shammah and others.

They confirm what has been reported in *tawaatur* form on the Commander of the Believers, 'Alee Ibn Abee Taalib ؑ and others that: **The best of this ummah after its Prophet are Abu Bakr; then 'Umar. Then they place 'Uthmaan third and 'Alee fourth, may Allaah be pleased with all of them.** This is as is indicated in the *athaar* (reports from the Sahaabah) and as was unanimously agreed upon that 'Uthmaan had precedence (over 'Alee) for being pledged allegiance to (for the Khilaafah).

In spite of this, after unanimously agreeing to the precedence of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, some of Ahl-us-Sunnah have disagreed with regard to 'Uthmaan and 'Alee as to which of them is better. So a group of them gave precedence to 'Uthmaan and then remained silent, and placed 'Alee as the fourth. And another group gave precedence to 'Alee. And yet another group remained neutral. But the affair of Ahl-us-Sunnah settled upon giving precedence to 'Uthmaan and then 'Alee.

Regardless, this issue of 'Uthmaan and 'Alee is not from the principles by which the one who disagrees concerning it becomes misguided (and deviant), according to the majority of the (scholars of) Ahl-us-Sunnah. Rather, the issue in which the one who opposes becomes misguided is the issue of the Khilaafah - and it is that they (must) believe that the Khaleefah after Allaah's Messenger was Abu Bakr, then 'Umar, then

'Uthmaan, then 'Alee. And whoever attacks the Khilaafah of any one of them, then he is more astray than the donkey of his people."

Then he mentioned that they have love and affection for the Members of the Household of Allaah's Messenger and that they preserve the Will (final requests) of Allaah's Messenger concerning them. And that they have affection for the Wives of Allaah's Messenger, the Mothers of the Believers and believe that they will be his wives in the Hereafter. Then he said:

"They absolve themselves from the way of the Rawaafid - those who hate the Companions and revile them - and from the way of the Nawaasib - those who abuse the Members of the (Prophet's) Household – through speech or action. And they refrain from (delving into) the disputes that occurred between the Companions. And they say: These narrations that have been reported concerning their faults have in them some that are false, some that have had things added to them, some that have had parts omitted from them, and some that have been changed from their original state. As for those narrations that are authentic (concerning their faults), then they (the Companions) are excused (and forgiven) - either they made Ijtihad and were correct or they made Ijtihad and were wrong.

Furthermore, they do not believe that each of the Companions is infallible and free from committing major or minor sins. Rather, they are capable of committing sins in general, however, they possess from precedence and virtues that which necessitates that they be forgiven for whatever (sins) they commit - if they did commit any. This is even to the point that they will be forgiven for evil deeds the likes of which those who come after them will not be forgiven for. This is because they possess good deeds that wipe out the evil deeds, the likes of which will not be for those after them.

It is established from the saying of Allaah's Messenger ﷺ that they are the best of generations and that if one of them were to give a *mudd* (of gold) in charity it would be better than if someone who came after them were to give the whole of Mount Uhud in gold. And if it was the case that one of them committed a sin, then either he repented from it or he performed some good deed that wiped it out. Or he will be forgiven for it due to the virtue of his precedence or because of the intercession of Muhammad ﷺ, of which the Companions have the most right among people of receiving. Or perhaps he was tested by some affliction in this world, by which it was expiated from him. So if this is with respect to the sins that were actualized (by them), then what about the matters in which they did Ijtihad? If they were correct they will have two rewards and if they were incorrect they will have just one reward and their error will be forgiven.

Furthermore, the amount of (bad) deeds committed by some of them, that is forsaken yet forgiven, is tiny in comparison to their virtues and good qualities, such as their belief in Allaah and His Messenger, their Jihaad for His Cause, their performance of Hijrah, their support (of the Religion), as well as their beneficial knowledge and good deeds. And whoever studies the history of the ‘people’ (i.e. the Sahaabah) with knowledge and insight, and studies the merits that Allaah bestowed unto them, he will come to know with full certainty that they are the best of creation after the prophets. There was not nor will there be anyone like them. They are the *safwah* (chosen elite) from all the generations of this nation (of Muslims), which is itself the best and most honorable of all nations with Allaah." [End of Ibn Taimiyyah’s words]

These are five examples from the sayings of the Salaf As-Saalih (righteous predecessors) which demonstrate what we are obligated to believe in with respect to the best of creation after the Prophets and Messengers. One thing we must understand is that defaming these chosen and unique individuals is equal to defaming the Religion itself, since it was none other than them who passed the Religion down to those who came after them. And we already mentioned the words of Abu Zur'ah, in which he said: "The only ones who brought this Qur'aan and Sunan (plural of Sunnah) to us are the Companions of Allaah's Messenger. (So) they only wish to disparage and demolish our witnesses so that they can nullify the Book and the Sunnah, whereas they are more deserving of being disparaged for they are the heretics (*zanaadiqah*)."

This refers to those who seek to belittle any of the Companions. It implies that the one who defames them does not harm them in the least but rather he only benefits them, based on afore-mentioned hadeeth of the **"bankrupt person."** The one who defames them only causes harm to himself. So whoever finds in his heart love for them and a lack of hatred for them, and withholds his tongue from mentioning anything but good about them, then he should praise Allaah for this blessing. And He should ask Allaah to keep him firm upon this guidance. And whoever holds any hatred for them in his heart and his tongue is loose in mentioning them with that which does not befit them, then he must fear Allaah and desist from these crimes. And he must repent to Allaah while the door of repentance remains open in front of him, before he regrets it at a time when regrets will be of no benefit.

Our Lord do not cause our hearts to go astray after having guided us and grant us mercy from Yourself, indeed You are the One who grants all requests. **"Our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in Faith. And put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord, You are indeed full of kindness, most Merciful."**

[End of Treatise]